

PSLE SCIENCE

PSLE SCIENCE EXAMINATION FORMAT

The examination consists of one written paper comprising two booklets, Booklet A and Booklet B.

Table 1

Booklet	Item Type	Number of Questions	Number of marks per question	Weighting (%)
A	Multiple-choice	30	2	60
B	Open-ended	14	2,3,4	40

- I. Booklet A consists of 30 multiple-choice questions. Each multiple-choice question carries 2 marks.
- II. Booklet B consists of 14 open-ended questions. Each open-ended question carries 2, 3 or 4 marks.

DURATION OF PAPER

The duration of the paper is 1 hour 45 minutes.

EXAM TIPS

Exam preparation:

1. The most important thing in exam preparation is planning. It is crucial to know the date, time, venue and duration of your examination.
2. In the case of Science Exam, you must know the topics that you will be covering for the exams.
3. Set a revision timetable before exam. Set a realistic goal and work on it.
4. Plan your timetable.
5. First, list the topics you need to cover, then draw out a plan on what to study. See the examples below:

Exam: PSLE Science	Date: XX/XX/2011	Time: 8.00-9.30 a.m.
Topics to be covered:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cycles 2. Systems 3. Energy 4. Interactions 5. Revision of P3/4 Sciences 		

From the list of topics that need to be covered, you will need to draw out a plan such as a timetable to execute your revision of the topics above.

Remember your planning must be reasonable and achievable.

Do take note of the things that you will need to do for that day or week in order to be able to plan your revision successfully.

- You must remember to minus the time
- you will need for the days where you may have Remediation in school,
 - needed for you to complete your homework or
 - even for your favourite TV programme!

Refer to the example below for an example of an achievable planning:

Date of Exam: 06/10/2011	Countdown : 90 days
Bearing in mind I have 90 days before exams and 5 main topics to cover	
90 divide by 5 = 18 days per topic.	
For each topic: Subdivide the number of days to the chapters needed to cover.	
For example. Cycles would have about 4 chapters. So 18 divide by 4 = 4 days remaining 2 days.	
The 2 days can be used to revise the whole topic on cycle. For each chapter, spend about 1 hour revising/ recapping with 45 minutes of assessment practices.	
During revision, remember to draw mindmaps or concept maps as an overview of what you have learnt. This will help to quickly summarize the topics that you have covered.	

Strategies in Answering Exam Questions

Before answering the questions, do the following:

1. Write your full name, class, date, registration number, etc
2. Check for any missing pages
3. Bring a wrist watch so that you can allocate your time properly. In doing so, you may want to consider the number of questions and the marks awarded for each question.
4. Allocation of time

Example:

Section A consists of 30 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ)
 2 marks are allotted for each question
 - Total 60 marks

Section B consists of 15 -20 Open ended Questions (OE)
 - Total 40marks

Total number of questions : 30 + 15 = 45

Total time/duration : 1h 45min = 105 min

Hence,

Section A:
 Do not spend more than 45 minutes answering the MCQ.
 Each MCQ should not take more than 1 minute.

Section B:
 Do not spend more than 45 minutes answering the Open-Ended Questions.
 Each question should not take more than 2 minutes.

Allocate the remaining 15 minutes to thoroughly check that you have answered and shaded the OAS correctly.

Proceed to the next question if you cannot answer any question you are attempting within the given time especially if it only carries 1 or 2 marks.

Remember to attempt it again when you are going through the papers.

5. Write neatly and clearly.

Strategies in tackling exam questions

SECTION A (30 X 2 MARKS)

For each question, 4 options are given. Choose the most suitable option and write its number in the Answer Sheet provided.

Sample question 1:

Which one of the following is a characteristic of living things?

- 1) All living things can die
- 2) All living things cannot reproduce
- 3) All living things need water and food only
- 4) All living things make their own food

Answer: 1

Read the question carefully. The question wants you to choose characteristics of living things. You may highlight that point. Then for each option, you may want to either tick or cross to siphon the correct answer. See example below:

Q1: Which one of the following is a characteristic of living things?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) All living things can die | ✓ |
| 2) All living things cannot reproduce | X |
| 3) All living things need water and food only | X |
| 4) All living things make their own food | X |

It is obvious that after going through each option, I can conclude that **option 1 is the correct answer.**

Sample question 2:

Kamal released 50 red-spotted and 50 unspotted green frogs of the same species in an enclosed green field that has snakes. After 2 months, the number of red-spotted frogs is half of the number of unspotted green frogs.

Which of the following are possible explanations for the difference in the frog population?

- A. Red-spotted frogs died due to their colouring.
- B. The unspotted green frogs were able to camouflage among the grass.
- C. The red spots on the frogs prevented them from finding food.

- (1) A and B only
- (2) A and C only
- (3) B only
- (4) B and C only

Answer: 4

There are many possible explanations, so you have to decide logically which one makes more sense.

A: Putting red spots cannot confirm whether it will harm the frogs. The red spot is put to make it more visible in the green field. This option is not possible.

B: This is possible as green frogs can camouflage in the green grass, so this makes it more difficult for the snakes to spot its prey.

C: This is possible as the red spot makes it very visible for the snakes to catch their prey.

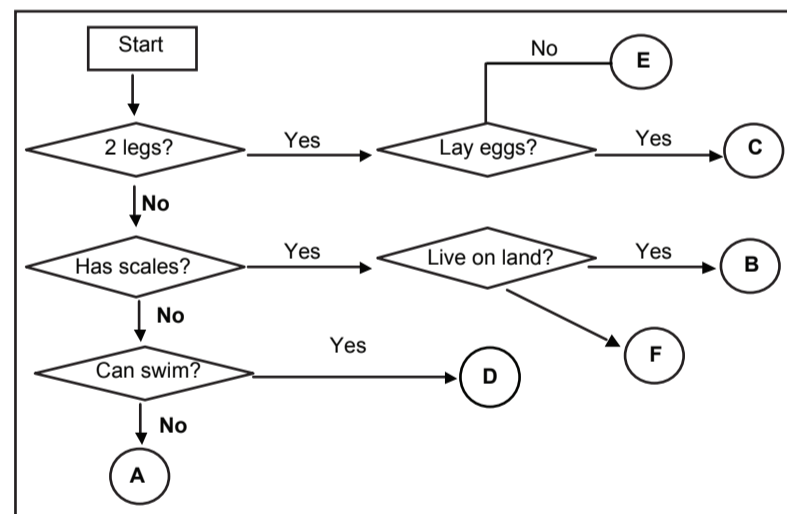
Thus by elimination, only B and D are the logical answers.

SECTION B (40 MARKS)

Fill in the blanks and open-ended questions.

Sample Question 3:

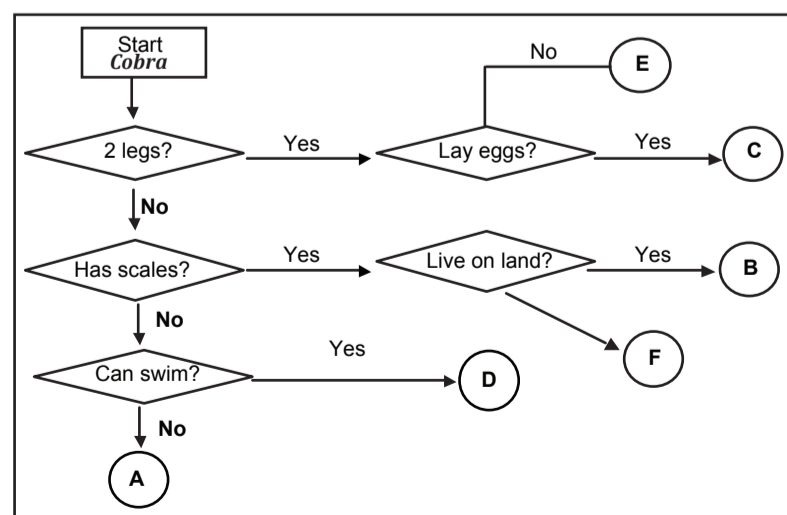
Study the flow chart and complete the table below. (4 marks)



Animal	Letter
cobra	
snail	
parrot	
dolphin	

For such a flowchart question, you will have to take each item given and place it from the start position. It's like playing a game. See the example below:

Q: Study the flow chart and complete the table below.



• Strategy:

- i. First, I will take the cobra and put it right from the start of the flowchart.
- ii. Then, I answer the first question box.
 Does a cobra have 2 legs?
 The answer is no. So, I follow the 'No' arrow.
- iii. I will see the next question box
 Does a cobra have scales?
 The answer is yes!
 I will follow the 'Yes' arrow.

- iv. I will see the next question box
 Does a cobra live on land?
 The answer is yes!
 I will see the letter B.
My answer for cobra is B.

Next, try doing the same for snail, pigeon and whale. By following the steps above, your answer will be as shown below and you will earn your 4 marks!

Answer:

Animal	Letter
cobra	B
snail	A
parrot	C
dolphin	D

• Strategy:

When answering open ended questions, identify the topic of that question and use scientific concepts and words.

For Example:

Sample Question 4:

Why do towels dry up faster under the sun? (1 mark)

Wrong Answer: It is hot so it dries up faster.

The above answer does not explain scientifically how being hot dries up the towel.

Correct Answer: The towel **gains heat** from the sun, so the water will have **higher evaporation rate**, hence, causing it to dry faster.

• Strategy:

Some questions may ask you to compare or choose one of the options given.

When answering such question, make use of **comparison words** such as: **lesser, more, bigger, greater, greatest**, etc.

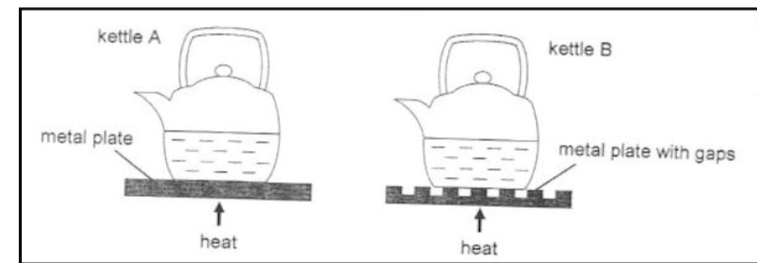
For example:

Sample Question 5:

In an experiment, John placed two identical kettles with the same amount of water on 2 metal plates of the same material with different surfaces. The plates were heated below.

In which kettle A or B would the water boil first?

Give a reason for your answer. (2 marks)



Correct Answer: Kettle A would boil first. The metal plate in A has larger surface area of contact between the kettle and the plate as compared to Kettle B which has less surface area of contact.

• Strategy:

Do not restate the questions given as it does not answer the question.

For example:

Sample Question 6:

Explain clearly how the styrofoam container reduces heat loss from the food stored inside it? (1 mark)

Wrong answer: Styrofoam helps to reduce the loss of heat for the food to be kept warm.
 (This is restating of question)

Correct answer: Styrofoam is a **poor conductor** of heat. It **does not allow heat to travel easily** so the heat remains trapped in the box for a longer time, helping it to be kept warm.

(Answer using related science words on heat:
 good conductor – allow heat to pass through easily
 poor conductor – do not allow heat to pass through easily)

• Strategy:

Answering science questions relating to relationship:
 You may use the keywords given in the question and add the observation from the data.

Sample Question 7:

Minah used a datalogger to record the amount of light traveled through sheets of paper. Her record is as shown in the table below: (1 mark)

Number of sheets	Amount of light (units)
0	80
1	32
2	13
3	5
4	2
5	1
6	

From the experiment above, what is the relationship between the number of sheets and the amount of light? (1 mark)

Correct Answer: The **higher** the number of sheets, the **lower** the amount of light.

Or

The **lower** the number of sheets, the **higher** the amount of light.

Note that we reuse the keywords given (bold) and add the comparison words (underlined)

*Additional information/tip:

For relationship questions, it would be better if pupils use the terms "increase" and "decrease" as they can be applied to almost all types of relationship questions.

For example, the answers to the above could be

"As the number of sheets increases, the amount of light decreases."